

Message Text

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UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 PORT AU PRINCE 0488

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SUBJECT: JEUNE PRESSE ELBAUKSG IDMN HUMAN RIGHTS

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1. TRANSMITTED HERewith IS FULL TEXT OF EDITORIAL ON
HUMAN RIGHTS PUBLISHED IN DECEMBER 13-22 ISSUE OF HAITIAN
WEEKLY NEWSPAPER JEUNE PRESSE. ALTHOUGH HIGHLIGHTS HAVE
BEEN REPORTED BEFORE, WE BELIEVE THIS ARTICLE, WRITTEN BY
JEUNE PRESSE CO-EDITOR BOB NEREE, IS A REMARKABLE STATEMENT
ON HUMAN RIGHTS WORTHY OF BEING READ IN ITS ENTIRETY BY
ANY STUDENT OF PRESS FREEDOM OR HUMAN RIGHTS IN HAITI.

2. BEGIN TEXT. "GUARANTEE AND PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS
IN HAITI, BY BOB NEREE. HUMAN RIGHTS - IN FAVOR OF
POLITICAL PRISONERS"

ON AN INTERNATIONAL SCALE, PRIORITY IS GRANTED AT
THE END OF THIS YEAR TO THE QUESTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS, AND
AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PLANS TO DECLARE 1977 THE
"INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE."

THE QUESTION CONCERNS A GREAT NUMBER OF COUNTRIES
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AROUND THE WORLD, AND HAITI IS DIRECTLY AFFECTED IN VIEW
OF THE FACT THAT HAITIANS RESIDING ABROAD FEEL OBLIGED TO
PUT THE HAITIAN GOVERNMENT ON THE STAND AND RAISE THE
QUESTION OF RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN OUR COUNTRY.

THE ISSUE IS IMPORTANT. TWENTY-EIGHT YEARS AGO AT
THE CREATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS, THE SAFEGUARDING OF

PEACE AMONG NATIONS AND THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF THE RIGHTS OF MAN CONSTITUTED THE TWO PRINCIPAL SUPPORTING PILLARS OF THIS INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY.

ALL MEMBER COUNTRIES OF THE U.N. AGREED TO RESPECT THESE INALIENABLE RIGHTS OF MAN TO ENJOY HIS FREEDOM OF THOUGHT, OF EXPRESSING HIS OPINION, AND OF LIFE WITHOUT FEAR.

ALL THE MEMBER COUNTRIES OF THE U.N. AGREED TO ENSURE IN THEIR TERRITORY RESPECT FOR THE DIGNITY OF MAN AGAINST ALL POLITICAL, SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, RELIGIOUS, RACIAL OR SEXUAL DISCRIMINATION.

BETWEEN THE TIME OF THIS UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF THE RIGHTS OF MAN IN 1948 AND TODAY, THESE RIGHTS HAVE BEEN VIOLATED AND TRAMPLED IN ABOUT 107 COUNTRIES. DURING THE LAST TEN YEARS ONE NOTES THAT LIVING CONDITIONS IN PRISONS HAVE BECOME MORE SEVERE, PARTICULARLY FOR POLITICAL PRISONERS. "THE LIFE OF PRISONERS IS CHARACTERIZED BY CHRONIC MALNUTRITION AND MEDICAL NEGLECT," ACCORDING TO THE VERY STATEMENTS OF THE LAST BULLETIN OF AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL.

THIS ORGANIZATION BELIEVES THAT THE SUPPRESSION OF PRESS FREEDOM, THE MASS TORTURE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS, INHUMAN OR DEGRADING PUNISHMENT, PROLONGED DETENTION WITHOUT CHARGES OR HEARING ARE THE SAME AS VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS THAT MUST BE DISCOVERED AND STOPPED AND PUNISHED WITH DETERMINATION.

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THE ISSUE OF RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS HAS BECOME THE PRINCIPAL INTERNATIONAL QUESTIN OF THE DAY SINCE THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA CALLED ON THE UNITED NATIONS THE END OF THIS YEAR TO STRENGTHEN ITS PROCEDURES CONERNING THE RIGHTS OF MAN.

ONE HEARD THIS SUBJECT DISCUSSED SERIOUSLY DURING THE RECENT AMERICAN ELECTIONS WHEN PRESIDENT CARTER CONDITIONED AMERICAN FOREIGN AID ON THE STATUS OF RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE COUNTRIES CONCERNED.

RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS WAS ALREADY AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE PROCESS OF GRANTING AMERICAN AID ABROAD. TWO IMPORTANT LAWS, AMENDMENTS TO THE FUNDAMENTAL FOREIGN AID LAW OF 1961, NAMELY THE LAW OF 1975 ON FOOD AID AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE LAW OF 1976 ON AID FOR INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AND CONTROL OF ARMS EXPORTS, STIPULATE THE PROCEDURES AND DIRECTIVES APPLICABLE

TO AMERICAN ASSISTANCE IN THE SAME PHRASEOLOGY AS THE
UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS.

THE AMERICAN CONGRESS ALSO ASSIGNED ITSELF THE TASK
OF GATHERING INFORMATION AND PERIODICALLY EXAMINING THE
POLITICAL SITUATION OF COUNTRIES BENEFITTING FROM AMERICAN
AID.

IT IS KNOWN THAT THE CASE OF HAITI HAS BEEN EXAMINED
SEVERAL TIMES IN THE AMERICAN CONGRESS. ONE OF THE HEARINGS
WHICH HAD VERY BROAD INTERNATIONAL REPERCUSSIONS IS THAT
WHICH FOLLOWED THE VISIT TO PORT AU PRINCE OF REPUBLICAN
SENATOR EDWARD W BROOKE IN APRIL 1974.

ON THE STATUS OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN HAITI THE CONGRESS
HAS RECEIVED INFORMATION PROVIDED BY SEVERAL SOURCES, FROM
REPORTS OF HAITIAN EXILE GROUPS IN NEW YORK AND MONTREAL
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AND FROM AMERICAN CITIZENS WHO HAVE VISITED HAITI. SENATOR
BROOKE'S REPORT WAS THEREFORE HIGHLY CONTROVERSIAL, AND
HAITIAN RESIDENTS IN WASHINGTON CAST DOUBT ON THE IMPARTIAL
OBSERVATIONS OF SENATOR BROOKE WHOSE PICTURE, TAKEN WITH
THE CHIEF OF STATE, EVINCED, ACCORDING TO THE HAITIANS IN
THE U.S., HIS COMPLACENCY TOWARD THE MEN IN POWER IN
PORT AU PRINCE.

IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT IN ADDITION TO REPORTS FROM
PUBLIC HEARINGS, THE AMERICAN CONGRESS, THROUGH THE COOPERATION
OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WAS AWARE OF CERTAIN FACTS
THAT A CERTAIN POLICY OF THE HAITIAN GOVERNMENT COULD
EXPLAIN BUT NOT DENY (SIC).

ALSO IN FAVOR OF HAITI WAS THE SPECIAL CLAUSE WHICH
GIVES THE GREEN LIGHT FOR FOOD AID AND DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE
SINCE IT DIRECTLY BENEFITS THE NEEDY.

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-13 DHA-02 ORM-02 AID-05 CIAE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4021

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AT THE UNITED NATIONS LAST NOVEMBER 24, THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES STATED THAT "THERE ARE FOUND HERE TODAY MEN AND WOMEN WHO BELIEVE DEEPLY IN THE CAUSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS, BUT WHOSE GOVERNMENTS FIND THEMSELVES CAUGHT BY PARTICULAR AND EXTRAORDINARY SOCIAL NEEDS, THEY SAY, WHICH DEMAND THAT THEY BE GIVEN PRIORITY ATTENTION."

"THEIR LEADERS ARE PREOCCUPIED BY THE ENORMOUS PROBLEMS PRESENTED BY THE EFFORTS THEY MUST MAKE TO LIFT THEIR PEOPLE FROM POVERTY, ELIMINATE ILLITERACY AND ACQUIRE BASIC ELEMENTS OF MODERN TECHNOLOGY. IN MANY CASES, THE DIFFICULTIES WHICH THEY CONFRONT SERVE AS AN ARGUMENT IN FAVOR OF THE DOMINATING ROLE OF THE STATE, TO SUCH A DEGREE THAT LIBERTY AND HUMAN RIGHTS DISAPPEAR IN THE NAME OF DEVELOPMENT. HISTORY HAS SHOWN THAT THERE LIES A DESTRUCTIVE AND UNFOUNDED FICTION..."

"...LIBERTY IS THE ALLY OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND NOT ITS ENEMY. NATIONS EXPERIENCE ECONOMIC GROWTH WHEN THE SPIRIT OF INNOVATION, THE CREATIVE ABILITIES AND THE FREEDOM OF THEIR PEOPLE ARE UNFETTERED, AND NOT WHEN THEIR ENERGIES ARE RESTRAINED AND SHACKLED."

"...THE BEST WAY TO FREE THEMSELVES FROM NEED IS TO RESPECT CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS; THE LOVE OF LIBERTY AND UNCLASSIFIED

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THE EFFORTS MADE TO PROMOTE ITS CAUSE CONSTITUTE AT ONCE A MORAL NECESSITY AND A PRIOR CONDITION FOR THE BETTERMENT OF THE LIVING CONDITIONS OF PEOPLE".

THESE WORDS OF AMBASSADOR SCRANTON AT THE U.N. ARE PRONOUNCED TO PUT AN END TO RHETORIC AND INITIATE CONCRETE ACTION IN FAVOR OF RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN MORE THAN 107 COUNTRIES OF THE GLOBE WHERE THEY ARE TRAMPLED.

LIKE AMBASSADOR SCRANTON, WHITNEY ELLSWORTH, PRESIDENT OF AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, THINKS THAT IT IS TIME THAT GOVERNMENTS WHICH MAKE USE OF FEAR AS AN INSTRUMENT OF NATIONAL POLICY BE PUNISHED THROUGH INTERNATIONAL PROCEDURES.

MR. ELLSWORTH ESTIMATES THAT SINCE 1961, AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL HAS BEEN ABLE TO OBTAIN THE RELEASE OF ABOUT 9,000 POLITICAL PRISONERS. NEVERTHELESS, THERE ARE STILL MANY WHO HAVE BEEN IMPRISONED FOR MORE THAN 10 YEARS WITHOUT HAVING BEEN ACCUSED OR JUDGED. THE ORGANIZATION HAS NO RECENT NEWS OF A GREAT NUMBER OF POLITICAL PRISONERS. AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S ANNUAL REPORT SHOWS THAT HUMAN RIGHTS ARE IN DECLINE TO A VERY DISTURBING DEGREE IN THIS LAST QUARTER OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY. IN MORE THAN 60 COUNTRIES TORTURE IS A COMMON POLICE PRACTICE.

ONE RECALLS THE DEFINITION ADOPTED AT GENEVA TWO YEARS AGO BY 99 COUNTRIES GATHERED IN A CONGRESS FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRIME AND THE TREATMENT OF DELINQUENTS. TORTURE IS "AN ACT THROUGH WHICH PAIN OR SEVERE SUFFERING, PHYSICAL OR MENTAL, IS DELIBERATELY INFLICTED ON A PERSON BY A REPRESENTATIVE OF PUBLIC FORCES OR AT THEIR INSTIGATION, FOR THE PURPOSE OF OBTAINING FROM THAT PERSON OR FROM THIRD PARTIES INFORMATION OR CONFESSIONS OR TO PUNISH THE PERSON FOR AN ACT COMMITTED OR BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN COMMITTED, OR TO INTIMIDATE THAT PERSON OR TO INTIMIDATE OTHER PERSONS."

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THE U.S. AMBASSADOR TO THE U.N. SUGGESTS AS A CONCRETE MEASURE TO CONTROL AND PUNISH THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS: THE CREATION OF THE POSITION OF HIGH COMMISSIONER OF THE UNITED NATIONS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND OF A PERMANENT ORGANISM WHOSE ROLE WOULD BE TO INVESTIGATE COMPLAINTS AND WHICH WOULD MEET ON A REGULAR BASIS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.

THE SAFEGUARDING OF HUMAN RIGHTS IS A SACRED RESPONSIBILITY INCUMBENT UPON ALL OF US. HAITIANS, MOST OF ALL AFTER 172 YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE AND POLITICAL TURMOIL, CAN APPRECIATE LIBERTY IN ALL ITS FORMS.

WE CANNOT DENY IT. ON NUMEROUS OCCASIONS SINCE THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF THE RIGHTS OF MAN, WE, LIKE OTHER PEOPLES HAVE NOT KEPT OUR COMMITMENTS.

WE RECOGNIZE THAT THE NOTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS DOES NOT APPLY EXCLUSIVELY TO CERTAIN GROUPS AND TO CERTAIN ISOLATED MOMENTS IN HISTORY. THIS IS WHY FOR ALMOST SIX YEARS THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC HAS BEEN RESOLUTELY COMMITTED TO A POLICY DESIGNED TO GUARANTEE AND PROTECT HUMAN RIGHTS IN HAITI.

TRUE, ONE CANNOT REPAIR OVERNIGHT THE OFTEN SADLY IRREPARABLE MISTAKES, BUT ONE CAN AT LEAST PUT AN END TO A GIVEN STATE OF AFFAIRS AND OFFER AS OF THIS INSTANT NEW

GUARANTEES.

THROUGHOUT THE WORLD ONE RECOGNIZES THAT THE SAFEGUARDING
OF HUMAN RIGHTS IS A FAR TOO SACRED RESPONSIBILITY TO LEAVE
EXPOSED TO POLITICAL MANIPULATION. FOR IT IS
LIBERTY AND THE LIFE OF A CITIZEN THAT ARE EACH TIME AT STAKE.

IN HAITI, AS IN ALL THE COUNTRIES OF THE WORLD, THE
PRESS HAS THE RESPONSIBILITY TO ENSURE RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS.

FOR HUMAN RIGHTS ARE FURTIVELY VIOLATED BY LITTLE BLOWS
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IN THE SHADOWS...AND EACH ONE OF THESE BLOWS IS OFTEN SO
SMALL THAT IT DOESN'T SEEM TO JUSTIFY A DEFENSIVE ACTION, AT
LEAST AT THE TIME. WHAT IS NEEDED IS TO EXPOSE THESE CASES
OF VIOLATIONS IN A PRECISE, INCESSANT AND TOTAL MANNER, TO
STRUGGLE AGAINST THIS DESTRUCTIVE PROCESS.

"IN DARKNESS," GOES THE SAYING, "THE HUMAN CONSCIENCE

CAN IGNORE INJUSTICE. BUT WHEN LIGHT APPEARS FEW MEN OF
CONSCIENCE CAN REMAIN SILENT." BOB NEREE END TEST.
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Message Attributes

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